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TRUTH IS— TRUCE ISN'T!

The N.E.C. has found it necessary to issue a long and detailed statement on the electoral truce, as a counter-blast to the wealth of mischief being disseminated on this issue by disturbers or ill-informed persons within the Party.

That there is no political truce at all doesn't seem to stop the torrent of misrepresentation, and these critics still prefer to have it that the Party has entered into an electoral truce, purely as a part of their policy of working-class betrayal and of co-operation with the Government.

The N.E.C., therefore, in brushing aside the resolutions from these people, and in putting the full facts before the local Parties in the country, have taken a wise action.

No one who reads the N.E.C. statement can but be convinced of the futility and mockery of by-elections under present conditions; indeed, the figures for every one of these unofficially-contested elections prove the Party's case. Each such election emphasises the impossibility of getting

representative voting just now—all one gets is a pip-squeak out of a big bassoon. But, man alive, as a friend said, this pleases them—the narrow-natured little Communist, and the everlasting critic who mistakes venom for vigour and virulence for vision and for virtue.

An Ounce of Practice

Two months ago Jack Cutter, in our second war-time issue, gave some first-hand experience of war-time electioneering, and we doubt if there is a single one among those who pass these resolutions demanding by-elections, but who, when the time came, wouldn't funk doing the very work he has demanded should be done.

Test it. Are these people *to-day* going round in the black-out for members' subscriptions? Do they tackle *fresh* people, unknown houses and entrances, and distribute literature in the Stygian darkness to now quite Stygian householders?

Have they tales to tell of dogs, holes, clothes-lines and props, pitfalls, pumps,

steps, bends, bushes, banks, gates, gutters, swings, pergolas and the devil knows what, by which a man to-day defends the approaches to his castle—not to mention what the kids leave on the paths?

Jack Cutter told of hostile householders resentful of being disturbed, of canvassers being mistaken for aid raid wardens; of ghastly car rides at night, the limitation of activities all along the line, with school-rooms, with loud-speakers, with train services, literature, on open-air meetings, etc. And with the register.

Hundreds of thousands Absent Voters cannot vote

The Labour Party mention some of these matters, and some others. Read this:—

"The Territorial Army of more than 400,000 men was embodied on the outbreak of war. Nearly 700,000 men have been or are now being conscripted, and a Proclamation has been issued making 2,000,000 more liable for service during 1940. The total number now in the Services and those made liable to service is in excess of 3,000,000. The names of none of these men will be placed on the Absent Voters' Lists, and it will, therefore, be impossible to poll their votes in by-election contests. If it is realised that the bulk of these men are drawn from the working classes, it will be appreciated that Labour's vote in by-elections may drop much more seriously than that of other political parties, no matter what type of constituency is being contested."

And this:—

"In the ten weeks after National Registration, almost a tenth of the population of Leeds changed addresses: 15,000 persons moving into the city, 8,000 leaving, and 25,000 removing within the city. In Bradford, in the same period, there were 10,000 changes. In Coventry, there was a net increase of population of about 11,000 in fourteen weeks; and it is estimated that there are each week about 1,000 removals of population within the city. It is reported, also, that removals within Liverpool have averaged 2,500 per week."

Again, we say, it is just common-

sense *not* to demand or indulge in elections just at present.

Labour's right to contest restorable at any time

What the critics refuse to see, however, is Labour's liberty to denounce the electoral truce at any time. This would not be done except for grave reasons, and probably mainly as a protest against some breach of the principle or implications of the truce. But don't let us run away with the idea that one way of paying the Government out for some special bit of work might be to denounce the truce. As things stand, our Party would be the biggest loser on a deal like that.

While on this question, there is one abuse of the truce to which our Party must be alive.

Often in normal times an M.P., tired of Parliament, and intending to retire at the next General Election, would like to quietly retire if his successor, chosen by his Party, could as quietly slip into his place. *But* the risk of a by-election often stops this nicely-arranged game, because by-elections are uncertain, and the proportion of losses to the enemy is far higher at by-elections than in Generals.

Has the game of letting pals into a warm bed already begun? We suspect it. If the truce is to be used by the Tories to smother into Parliament people who would never get there in a fair fight—well, circumstances *might* change; and a scrap might be helpful.

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EASY TERMS

L. P. ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Notices are "out" convening the 39th Annual Conference of the Labour Party, to be held at Bournemouth at Whitsuntide.

Though the notices state that the Conference will be held from Monday, May 13th, to Friday, May 17th, we have little doubt that a curtailment of this period will be found desirable later on.

Our own opinion is that the country would be just shocked if Labour forces come together as they usually do for business so early as the previous Friday and then talked and talked for the whole of the following week. Con-

ference itself is likely to be convinced of this fact before it meets, and we venture to suggest that a Conference continuing to May 17th is two days too long.

The Conference Arrangements Committee consists of George Oliver, M.P. (Chairman). Fred Marshall, M.P., J. H. Potts, James Crawford and L. W. Bussey—a list from which is missing several well-worn names who had appeared to be indispensable at Conference arrangements. We shall see how the new broom sweeps, and it is not inconceivable that some new problems will face the Committee.

WOOLWICH IN WARTIME

A letter from our old friend Mr. William Barefoot, of Woolwich, tells how one of Labour's pioneer Parties is surmounting present difficulties.

We gather that the Party is holding its own better than was expected and that membership subscriptions are more than up to expectation.

Here is a Party with, in round figures, 5,000 members. It has lost by resignation due to differences on Party policy since the war less than 50 members, though there are other losses due to evacuation, black-out difficulties, removals, army service, etc.

The Party has an annual wastage of about 400 members, due to such usual causes as removals, deaths, etc., and a membership drive is customary in the last quarter of the year, which replaces the wastage and sets the Party a little ahead.

It was not found possible to do the membership drive last quarter, but Woolwich has paid the Labour Party for 5,000 cards this year, and we hope to hear of a membership drive taking

place later on, and of a successful issue to this work.

Even the Woolwich Party does not deny the difficulties due to the black-out, which has made evening canvassing and collection almost impossible. The importance we attach to a solution of this problem is shown in the frequent reference to it in this issue.



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SOME REPORTS AND BALANCE SHEETS

GREENWICH

The season for reports is now with us, and the first batch to hand are encouraging documents. The Greenwich Labour Party—a truly great Party—is as usual one of the first with its annual report. We note that £353 18s. 9d. was received from members' subscriptions last year, a drop from £439 os. od. With nearly 90 voluntary collectors, this Party is nobly handling the difficulties created by the war. We read that more than 2,000 persons were advised during 1939 by the Legal Advice and Assistance Bureau; this in addition to hundreds of letters written and telephone calls made on behalf of enquirers. There is a Labour Council at Greenwich and a very fine Party to support it.

SOUTHAMPTON

Southampton Labour Party is also early with its report, and is similar in its experience. There are 128 membership collectors in Southampton, and last year they brought in £337 8s. 11d., a drop of £73 on the previous year. That this sum is no less in a town like Southampton speaks volumes for the energy and ability put into Party affairs. We note that to help meet this and other difficulties created by the war, a special war appeal was issued and realised £108.

NEWPORT, Mon.

Newport, Mon., with membership fees at £340, show a drop of £54 15s. od. only from last year's receipts from this source. Membership at 2,992 is a decline of only 136 on the previous year. This is another Party to be congratulated on holding its own so well. We note that during the year 100,000 copies of

the "Newport Citizen" were distributed throughout the town at a cost to the Party of only £4 11s. od.

HUDDERSFIELD

Huddersfield is an older Party than those above mentioned and perhaps a bit more old-fashioned in its ways. Anyway, it does not compete in figures. It does, however, show a creditable total of membership income, which at £173 is a drop of only £4 on last year. The membership at 1,021 is only 11 members less. We gather that a sale of work produced a net profit of £153, an item which, to anyone who knows anything about the organisation of these functions, betokens oceans of effort and self-denying work on the part of a whole army of people!

BRADFORD

The City of Bradford Labour Party present a statement of accounts which shows nothing less than a transformation of the position as it was to be found two years ago. Two years of steady effort directed by the present Secretary, Mr. W. V. Titherington, has turned a deficit of £200 into a surplus of £35. Affiliation fees have jumped to £172 and we note a bazaar profit amounting to £65 and a total income from other similar items of £181 during the last year. These figures, however, are even less an achievement than the comparative unity and sense of Party strength and well-being which has been brought back to Bradford.

The unique difficulties which preceded the two years' period to which we have referred, appear to be now well lost in the background, and Bradford is resuming its place and prestige among the foremost Parties in the country.

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MORTON'S, 14 GLOBE STREET - LONDON, S.E.1**LABOUR PARTY DIRECTORY****List of D.L.P. Alterations**

<i>Index</i>	<i>Descrip-</i>	<i>Name of Organisation</i>	<i>Present Secretary and Address</i>
G85/88	DB	West Ham B.L.P.	Mr. C. Harris, 50, Gainsborough Road, London, E.15.
B205	CD	Widnes D.L.P.	Mr. H. C. HILL, 72, Norlands Lane, Widnes, Lancs.
G214	SB	Lincoln D.L.P.	Mr. T. JESSOP, 30/32, Tentercroft Street, Lincoln.
E240	BD	Hackney North D.L.P.	Coun. Miss F. M. W. SILLS, 71, Casimir Road, London, E.5.
E244	SB	Hampstead L.P. & T.C.	Disaffiliated.
E253	BD	Kennington D.L.P.	Mr. H. FROST, 108, Clapham Road, London, S.W.9.
E258/9	DB	Paddington T.C. & L.P.	Mr. W. REID, 127, Ashmore Road, Paddington, London, W.9.
E263/5	DB	St. Pancras B.L.P.	Mr. S. F. ROBIN, 142, Royal College Street, London, N.W.1.
E264	BD	St. Pancras S.E., D.L.P.	" " "
E276	BD	Clapham D.L.P.	Mr. J. B. HAYWARD, 9, Clapham Park Road, London, S.W.4.
C336	CD	Shrewsbury D.L.P.	Mr. B. WILLIAMS (pro tem.), 15, Claremont Hill, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.
C358	CD	Cannock D.L.P.	Mr. C. HOTCHKISS, 50, Uxbridge Street, Hednesford, Staffs.
C400	BD	Birmingham West D.L.P.	Mrs. J. LYCETT, Friends' Hall, Farm Street, Hockley, Birmingham, 19.
A419	SB	Batley, Morley & Ossett D.L.P.	Coun. B. RICHARDSON, M.A., J.P., 6, Park Drive, Batley, Yorks.
A445	BD	Hillsborough D.L.P.	No Secretary at present.
A440/446	DB	Sheffield T. & L.C.	Coun. A. E. HOBSON, 40½, Bank Street, Sheffield, 1.
J511	BD	Aberdeen South D.L.P.	Mr. R. M. HAY, 259, Union Street, Aberdeen.
J516	SB	Ayr Burghs T.C. & L.P.	Mr. P. MCCARTNEY, 36, Taylor Street, Ayr.
J535	CD	Ross & Cromarty D.L.P.	Mr. MATHIESON, Station House, Dingwall, Ross-shire.
J565	SB	Leith D.L.P.	Mr. J. BREMNER, 3, Assembly Street, Leith, Edinburgh.
J579	CD	Clackmannan & W. Stirlingshire D.L.P.	Mr. W. MCGINNIS, 1, Castle Terrace, Denny, Stirlingshire

CONTACT

A · JOB · FOR · ALL · PARTIES

By J. T. Baxter

Assistant Administrative Officer, National Agent's Department

The War Office announced the other day that over one million and a quarter men are now "under arms," and it is estimated that they will be increased to over three million men during the next few months.

How many of these men are individual and affiliated members of the Party it is difficult to estimate. Every Local Labour Party organisation, however, *should* know how many of its members have been called up.

Middle-Aged Parties ?

Many Parties report that few of their members have been affected. This is particularly true of some mining and highly-industrialised constituencies where most of the men are in reserved occupations. From the replies of some other Parties it can be assumed that they had few, if any, young members under 23 years of age. Are these "middle-aged Parties"? An additional fact to note, of course, is that since the Party is fundamentally a peace party, it had few members who were called up because they were in the Territorials and other units of H.M. Service.

But what are Parties doing about members who *have* been called up? Does *your* Party know their names and addresses? If not, the first job should be to instruct the collectors to secure this information so that a card index can be built up by the secretary, or by a special officer appointed to do the job. A card index will prove useful, as time goes on, since it is obvious that addresses will change quite often.

Affiliated Members

All Parties should realise *now* that members called up should not be treated as "lost." Trade Union branches might be urged to keep contact with the politically affiliated members since it is, in practice, adminis-

tratively easier for the Trade Union branch to do this than the Local Party organisation.

Individual Members

Individual membership is the responsibility of Party organisations and *every means* must be adopted to keep the called-up member in touch with the Local Party and its affairs.

Romford, the Party with over 8,500 members is concerned to retain its membership and consideration is to be given to the suggestion that the Party should raise a special fund to supply all those called up with a 1940 Membership Card. Let *Romford* lead!

Some Parties report that persons have been appointed correspondents so that they can write a chatty and informal letter once a month. Extracts from replies are read at members' meetings. *Edmonton* reports that this idea has not only created interest for the receiver, but also for those who attend Party meetings. *Chester* reports that a similar kind of work is performed through the medium of the League of Youth and since ex-League members may be those who are being called up, every Party should consider following *Chester's* example.

Use of Local Papers

Many Parties send a copy of their local weekly or monthly Labour paper, and Leagues of Youth send a copy of their new paper "The Socialist." This is an admirable way of keeping contact, but when it is accompanied by a specially drawn-up circular, or personal letter, no matter how short, the man appreciates it much more. The letter prevents the appearance of routine.

A Good Example

The *Walthamstow* Borough Party has started a duplicated news-sheet

entitled "Contact." As its name implies, it is a special publication for those members who have been called up and, as a first attempt, it is excellent. I have no doubt that our Walthamstow comrades will improve the duplicating and layout in future issues.

"Contact" has got variety and punch. There are no long stodgy articles. Brief paragraphs carry a letter from the Chairman of the Party; a message from the M.P. (V. L. McEntee) and fraternal greetings from the Secretary of the Trades Council. One short paragraph indicates seven jobs which have been done by Labour in Parliament—the stuff to tell the troops! A competition with a prize of cigarettes is announced and the idea is to spot the mistakes in "Contact." Readers are asked to forward short letters to the Editor so that their pals in other centres, and their friends in the Party at home, may learn how they are going on. Finally,

this paper announces that their M.P., Councillors and "an able panel of advisers" are "ready at all times to help you, your wives and dependants in your difficulties."

The editorial of "Contact" reads:—

"Here is No. 1 of our paper 'Contact.' In size, a baby, but with an astonishing aptitude for growth. It is designed to keep in touch with the movement of which you in civil life are an integral part. In this initial copy leading members feel that this local touch will be much appreciated by yourself. Best wishes. Editor."

Now is the time for all Parties to make contact with members wherever they are. It can and must be done. Remember that when the men came back from the last Great War Labour had their support. When they return next time we *must* have a *majority* Labour Government.

Peeps at Parties—LIMEHOUSE

At six o'clock on five nights of each week Councillor Roeder, having done his day's work to earn a living, opens up the Limehouse Party Headquarters and takes charge as its Secretary until ten or eleven o'clock.

It is very dark along the Commercial Road these black-out nights, but there is a steady stream of callers in addition to those who attend Party meetings. Ward officers, contribution collectors, public representatives, as well as the electors who need advice on numerous problems, know that behind the boarded-up window frame—the glass has been twice smashed by the Fascists—Secretary Roeder and his colleagues are carrying on the work of the Party and that a welcome awaits them.

There is little to indicate that the war has disturbed the Limehouse Party. But one knows that, like every other Party, it had a crisis. In September it was found that for one reason or another twenty collectors' books were on the Secretary's hands. Not for long, however; steps were taken and all are now covered. ^{At 11} the 2000 members are

contacted. On this side of its work the Party is confident that it can extend and it intends to conduct a membership campaign early in the new year.

All the Party business meetings are proceeding as usual. Executive and General Committees, Ward and Women's Sections. The Ward meetings are attended better than for years, and two Wards—not content with monthly meetings—have changed them to one a week with great success. Sixty members attend the Women's Section, and throughout the Party social and educational activity is the order of the day. It isn't luck! It is devotion to Labour's cause and a determination to advance despite any difficulties.—From the "London News" for January, 1940.

AN APPEAL

We appeal to our readers to deal with "L.O." advertisers. It helps us. It helps them and, believe us, it helps you too!

Below we reproduce one of the best local leaflets which has been published for some time. It comes from Southampton and our readers may perhaps secure a copy by sending 1½d. stamp to Mr. A. Rose, 54, Henstead Road, Southampton.

YOUR PENNY A WEEK

What is it for?

WHY DO WE PAY A PENNY PER WEEK ?

Your weekly penny makes you a member of the Labour Party. There are many thousands of members like yourself in all parts of the country. Without members there would be no Labour Party.

WHY IS IT NOT ENOUGH TO VOTE LABOUR ?

When you vote Labour—together with sufficient others—you put a Labour man on the council or in Parliament, where he is opposed by councillors or M.P.'s who are determined that you shall not get those things you voted for.

You vote Labour because you want better housing, better education, higher old age pensions a higher standard of living, security of existence, a world free from war, and other things.

But your councillor or M.P. cannot get all these things just because you put a cross on a piece of paper at election times.

WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO ?

Many of the things you want cost money, and would have to be paid for mainly by the wealthy classes. These wealthy classes support the councillors and M.P.'s who are fighting against the men and women you voted for. They not only give money to oppose those things you vote for, but they give the support of hundreds of daily newspapers and magazines. Support is also given by thousands of employers of labour, bankers, shipowners, and all kinds of people.

Those who oppose your demands for a better existence are strong enough to do so, not merely because of the number of crosses they get on the ballot papers, **but because they are strongly organised.**

By paying your penny a week, you become organised in support of the things you vote for. By getting other Labour voters to do the same, you will help to make the organisation strong enough to get the things you vote for.

WHAT DO WE GET FOR OUR PENNY ?

In the ranks of the Labour Party are some of the best brains in this country. They are being devoted to your service.

In the House of Commons 165 Labour M.P.'s are making a valiant struggle on your behalf every day the House is open.

On local councils throughout the country many hundreds of Labour councillors are devoting tremendous energy in an effort to obtain the things you want. Week in and week out, year after year they go on demanding, and gradually getting the things you voted for—better housing, better education, higher old age pensions a higher standard of living, security of existence, a world free from war, and other things.

Surely all this is worth that small sum of one penny a week.

WHAT DOES THE PARTY DO NOW THERE ARE NO ELECTIONS?

Elections normally come once a year, but the work of the Labour Party goes on every day throughout the year.

The work of maintaining our organisation in face of war time difficulties costs money, and needs constant attention.

The war has brought about additional difficulties and dangers for the working class, and the Labour Party is giving constant attention to this matter.

War or no war, elections or no elections, our work of building a new world order must go on.

WHERE DO THE PENNIES GO?

It takes about two thousand pennies for the election of one member to the local council. It takes about 120 thousand pennies for the election of a member to the House of Commons.

In addition to elections and other local work, part of your penny is spent in keeping up the Labour Party organisation throughout the country, to support the work of our councillors and M.P.'s.

If that organisation weakens, the effectiveness of our councillors and M.P.'s will be weakened.

AND NOW . . .

And now, what about you. Are you attending any meetings, or giving any assistance to the Party that is struggling on your behalf.

As a member of the Labour Party you are part of a great and powerful force that is going to be a most important factor in the re-building of Europe when the war ends. From small beginnings, we have become one of the most important political organisations in the world.

Our movement is like a mighty river which, struggling into existence, is thwarted and baffled by every diversion in its path, its existence threatened by the smallest obstacle. Pushing irresistibly forward, it gathers strength with the aid of other streams, until from a quietly murmuring brook, it becomes a rushing mighty river, sweeping all obstacles from its path, master of its destiny, shouting its triumph as it plunges forward.

Our Party is well worth paying for and well worth working for. There is work for all to do that is both pleasant and simple.

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JACK CUTTER SAYS

The Yanks have a word for them

—So “War on Communist Stool Pigeons !”

Annual Meetings are in the offing again and upon their decisions will depend the leadership, direction and control of the D.L.P.s during a vital year.

The small groups of people who have been stupefied by Stalin and mesmerised by Molotov are busy whipping up their hand-picked dupes hoping to seize control for a year's orgy of resolution-sending and a year's neglect of effective work.

And other pretty games

“Packing” Annual Meetings has become a highly-skilled craft on the part of these groups. They have been at it for some years now and know all the gambits. Their technique improves each year and it is just about time responsible officers of the D.L.P.s faced up to the problem.

We should realise that their stooges are not elected to delegations by accident, but by careful planning at T.U. branches, etc., months ahead. I have ever recommended much more rigid supervision of delegates' credentials, and deplored the too common practice of a simple reminder to affiliated organisations that they are entitled to so many delegates and then accepting without question whomever is sent along. Very few D.L.P.s, when requesting the appointment of delegates, enclose the conditions of delegation included in the Party's Constitution, with the result that there are scores of organisations whose members in the mass are steadfast Party supporters, but who are “represented” on the Management Committees of the Party by delegates who constantly and deliberately speak, agitate and vote against Party policy and leadership. They don't believe in the Labour Party's policy, programme and principles. They are not in the

Party to help it, but to hinder it. They constitute a grave danger to the organised Labour Movement and we should no longer be content with the attitude one frequently meets, summed up in the airy phrase: “Oh, let them talk. They feed everybody up with their endless complaints.”

The point is that they *do* feed people up, so effectively that many of the delegates who come prepared to help in serious business become heartily sick of the wordy resolutions, the endless debates, the strictures on procedure, and the continual bickering which is the deliberate technique of the neo-Stalinists. Many of the steadiest delegates stay away from meetings or leave early in disgust, leaving the trouble-makers a clear field to play snakes and adders to their hearts' content.

Playing Snakes and Adders

Usually there is a leader of this group who is, to all intents and purposes, a member of the Communist Party and in close cahoots with that organisation. He does not possess a C.P. membership card, and if he made formal application for C.P. membership he would probably be refused because he is doing much more valuable work for them inside the Labour Party. The Americans have a word for this type of under-cover man. They would call him a stool pigeon.

The Party has tolerated the manoeuvres of such gentlemen far too long and it will, to say the least of it, be unwise to allow them full sway at the Annual Meetings. Requests for delegations to the A.G.M. should be so worded that affiliated organisations receiving them will be alive to the danger of haphazard appointment, and will know that there are certain clear and distinct conditions which a

delegate must satisfy. A form of pledge should be enclosed for each delegate to sign declaring that he or she understands that delegates have certain responsibilities and that he or she intends honestly to observe the Party's Constitution, Rules, Standing Orders and the decision of Annual Conference.

I have been told that this is "dragooning" delegates. It's new to me that a Party is wrong in defending its principles and policy from fifth column activities.

Delegates who have stayed away out of boredom or disgust with the resolution movers—or who not infrequently adopt the attitude: "Get rid of that C.P. crowd and I'll come back"—should be visited and asked to resume their duties instead of leaving the fight to others. Nominations should be carefully scanned to ensure that the meeting will have the opportunity of electing

officers of courage and capacity who will put the Party's policy and interests first. That cunning device of the Moscow Mystics, the "mandated" vote should be firmly dealt with. It is unconstitutional and out of order. The General Committee delegates have the right to make up their own minds in the light of the debate on any motion. Their vote is their own responsibility and cannot be dictated before the debate by any organisation. The rules clearly state that "The Management of the Party shall be in the hands of a General Committee."

Their job is, therefore, to manage, not to be managed.

A little trouble taken before the annual meeting to make sure that it will be truly representative with the fullest possible attendance of delegates will probably save a good deal of trouble later on.

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(Members T.A.)

(45 hours)

We hear that the Bermondsey Labour Magazine is still going great guns, despite the difficulties of the war and the black-out. The normal issue of the paper is 10,000 copies monthly, but, we are informed, the sales have actually trebled in many streets of Bermondsey since the war.

This paper, which has paid its way for a long time, still continues to do so, and to produce a balance for the Party each month. It has been in circulation since October, 1923. Is there another paper in the country with an equally proud record?

According to a "Daily Express" writer, the Communists in the South-wark by-election were kind enough to show him the result of their canvass.

The veracity of the "Daily Express" is not something which usually excites our admiration, though our doubts on the matter are placed at rest by our knowledge of Communist pretence and stupidity.

It would seem that the Communists boasted that 16,000 people were canvassed, and that just under 50 per cent. promised to vote Communist; just under 5,000 were doubtful, and 3,600 were, according to the Communist canvass, definitely against them.

Well, well; what a clack and a clutter to get 1,500 votes. And what super organisers these Communists be!

L.P. Staff Appointments and some Agency changes

Congratulations to the new Scottish Secretary of the Labour Party, Mr. John Taylor, who for several years has been the Labour Party District Organiser in the Eastern Counties.

Mr. Taylor's future address will be 44, South Portland Street, Glasgow, and our readers who have so often found entertainment and profit from his literary contributions to these pages, will, we know, join with us in wishing him great success in the important office he now fills.

Prior to Mr. Taylor's occupation in the post recently vacated, agency work held him for a number of years; at one time at Darlington and later at Reading. At the latter place especially he achieved outstanding success.

A versatile, capable, and good-tempered comrade is "Jock," and we are certain that these qualities combined with his outstanding zeal will achieve for Labour many new victories and added strength beyond the border.

Mr. Morgan Phillips has been appointed Eastern Counties Organiser of the Labour Party. He will, we understand, for the time being work the area from the London end.

As the National Propaganda Officer of the Labour Party during the last two years, Mr. Morgan Phillips has been an unquestioned success, at any rate from an outsiders' point of view. We are quite certain that Mr. Phillips will find more entertaining and profitable work tilling and reaping in the Eastern Counties than awaiting a return to normal political activity in the way of meetings and speaking propaganda. We wish him well, for Mr. Phillips has a unique experience, having been Agent, then Candidate, then Agent again, and lastly a Headquarters official in a position to profit by his contact both with other Agents and other Candidates.

Birmingham Borough Labour Party has, at the instigation of the Head

Office of the Party, again made an appointment of a Borough Organiser. Two past Birmingham Borough Organisers have been for some years Labour Party officials, i.e., Mr. Hinley Atkinson, London Party Organiser, and Mr. George Morris, Labour Party Organiser for Wales.

The new appointment has gone to one of the young men of the Movement, and Mr. Harry Wickham, at present Agent at Frome, moves to Birmingham at the beginning of March to take up duties.

We have known Mr. Wickham through practically his whole life story as a Party worker. He is only twenty-nine years of age now, and it does not seem so many years after the last war had ended before the name of Harry Wickham began to be noted as a capable and never-tiring worker for the League of Youth. When he was appointed Agent at Frome we expected great things, and despite the difficulties of the war, his work stands out in that Division as admirable in every respect.

It is not a bad sign to see a big Party like Birmingham taking the plunge of appointing an organiser full of youth and enthusiasm.

Another recent new appointment has been that of Mr. E. Furness as the Organiser of the Manchester Borough Party. Mr. Furness is another of the young brigade, though well seasoned by having first held an agency at Elland (Yorks.) and during the last few years at Tottenham South, where he was the Agent to Mr. R. C. Morrison, M.P. He has a big task in Manchester, but this varied experience should help him through, and his friends in both his former spheres of usefulness will join with us in wishing him well.

The following Agents have now relinquished their agencies:—

W. CHAPPELL, Lincoln.

W. REDDEFORD, Clapham.

G. E. TYLER, West Birmingham.

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PERSONAL

We regret to learn of the indisposition of Ald. George Brett, of Leeds, who has been ordered to take a complete rest following an examination by a heart specialist. Ald. Brett is Secretary to the Yorkshire District of the Labour Agents' Union. He is also Leader of the Labour Group on the Leeds City Council. His many friends will wish him a speedy and complete recovery.

Best wishes to Ald. J. H. Hollins who takes the place of Jack Jones, M.P., at Silvertown. This makes one more Labour ex-agent to enter the House of Commons. There are several ex-agents there already and some of them retain their honorary membership of the Agents' Union.

One of Mr. Hollins' opponents has been the chameleon-like Harry Pollitt. This gentleman by some means or another seems to have acquired a reputation for being just a good man gone wrong—"a very fine fellow, really,

you know, and an altogether different type to the ordinary run of Communists, etc." We hope Mr. Pollitt's antics on the war issue have debunked this sort of thing. We admire a man who has the courage to declare that he was wrong, and take the consequences therefor. But a man who says he was wrong or changes his opinions at the order of a committee, or similar body, is a moral coward no less, and unworthy of any sort of political confidence or trust.

We recollect Harry Pollitt in the Clay Cross by-election, where he sought to sabotage the attempted work of Arthur Henderson for Disarmament. Pollitt's defeat there cost him his deposit, and we hope that a fate no better awaits him at Silvertown. We recall that at Clay Cross scurrility at elections reached a new low level, the nondescript army brought in by Mr. Pollitt being apparently quite adepts at it. Since those days we have judged Mr. Pollitt by the company he keeps.

GOOD CIRCULAR WORK

We continue to receive evidence of the good work being done in several areas by the issue of bulletins and similar circulars.

The bulletins of the Brecon and Radnor D.L.P. and the Liverpool Trades Council and L.P., which reach us regularly, are both of high merit and indicate that considerable plodding work is put into them. There may be others of like sort but they have not reached us.

On less ambitious lines is an agent's monthly letter which is appearing in the Kettering Division. It should do good. Aberavon D.L.P. have also issued a few useful circulars and we note that this Party is publishing a panel of nearly 20 speakers who are ready to speak on Labour's Peace Aims.

The Middlesex Federation and the Hampshire Federation have both recently issued useful and encouraging matter.

War-time Collecting Problems

SOME HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS

War-time difficulties which have led to a shortage of collectors in some districts and to an increased onerousness about their work in all districts, have led to the revival of alternative schemes for getting in contributions, or to schemes tending to lessen the work of the collectors.

Paying at the Office

It is a strange thing that, while in some areas members themselves, or a big section of them, have been trained to call in person at the Party offices with their contributions, and so eliminate collectors altogether, there are other places where this happening is unheard of, notwithstanding that in these same districts it may be a common custom for people to call at various premises for the payment of club dues, etc., of all kinds.

It must be confessed that the practice of payment we have described, although ideal, is confined to very few Parties only, but there is no reason why it should not be introduced in quite a lot of places with varying degrees of success. The method is, at any rate, worth a trial, and some Parties have premises, the interiors of which might prove most welcome havens in the black-out. (N.B.—This is *not* a joke, nor an adroit invitation to the club bar!)

Apart from attempts along these lines, we believe that the only thing for Parties to do is to seek to get over the present difficulties of collectorship (1) by enlisting more members as collectors; (2) reducing the number of members per collector; and (3) by a fuller recognition of the important part in Party machinery played by collectors and by the collecting system.

It would be idle to deny the fact that, apart from calling up and other war conditions, more injury is likely to be done to Labour organisation by Sir John Anderson's black-out conditions than

from any other cause. In our opinion, the whole black-out business is a manifest absurdity, though possibly it is, after all, one of the weapons of the enemy—our enemy, we mean—the capitalist class at home! These people believe in black-outs, mental and physical.

Whatever may be the case, Labour must take up the challenge of the black-out and defeat its effect on our membership. Fortunately, summer is coming and the evils will shortly be lessened because of that fact.

It's more Collectors we want

In the meantime, the push for collectors must continue, and especially should we endeavour to make arrangements that would facilitate day-time collecting. Day-time collecting is the obvious reply to night-time failure, although there are areas where factory collecting is in part possible, or at any rate, where factory collectors find readier means of getting their contributions than by wandering about in the dark at night.

An aid to collecting in some areas may be the envelope scheme, which has recently been revived by the West Willesden Labour Party, but which has been tried fairly extensively in years past in other areas.

It must be remembered that the envelope scheme can never be any substitute for a real collectorship scheme, but it may prove a supplement and an aid in some cases.

We quote from a circular by Mr. A. E. Nunn, the Agent at West Willesden, who says that

"The idea is that members are supplied with a set of envelopes, covering, say, the first half-year. There is an envelope for every Saturday, commencing January 6th. The member is asked to make it a practice to put in the envelope each week-end that amount he or she has promised or can

afford (minimum 1d.). Each member is supplied with a membership card.

"Collectors (not necessarily the former ones) who will establish their identity will call possibly once each month, and, as the contribution has been put by in the envelopes, will not call in vain. The collector will open the envelopes, in the presence of the member, and enter the amount collected on the member's card and in the collection book."

If any of our readers have other suggestions on this matter, we should be pleased to hear from them.

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Special War-time Terms for Members of the Labour Party

S. JOHN GEE (Late Agent, North Norfolk) - - Resident Proprietor

A New Recreation.—We suggest to our readers that at the next Executive Meeting or Party Meeting they mentally make a computation of the average age of the meeting. The result will probably prove a little disconcerting, even if one gallantly credits every lady with being much younger than she looks. We have tried this thing ourselves, and find that the average age of the last six meetings we have attended ranged from 38 to 55—which is what one might expect if we are to accept the gibe that we are a middle-aged Party! —From the "L.O." for January, 1932.

Obituary

HERBERT HEAVISIDE

It is with deepest regret that we have to record the death of Councillor Herbert Frederick Heaviside, which took place as a result of influenza a few days ago.

Mr. Heaviside, who at the time of his death was Mayor of Doncaster, had been Labour Agent for the Doncaster Division for the last eighteen years. He was a Lancashire man, and his 60 years of life was full of good deeds. He was among the hordes converted to Socialism by "Merrie England" late in the last century. The many friends and comrades of Herbert Heaviside in all parts of the country will deeply regret the loss of a hearty and loyal comrade, and a sincere and high-thinking worker in the Cause.

FRANK COLES

Our readers, and particularly his old comrades in Lewisham, will be pained to learn of the death of Mr. Frank Coles, Agent at Wednesbury. Mr. Coles was one of the younger school of Agents, and was barely thirty-four when he died. His success at Lewisham had marked him out for advancement, and the change to Wednesbury was some indication of this. By his death, Labour has lost one of its youngest and most able Organisers.

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SOME LABOUR ORGANISER REPRINTS

DON'T SUP-PRESS

As an epithet oft applied to the Capitalist Press the term sup-press has passed into a classic in Labour ranks. We are tempted, however, to ask whether the process of suppression is not unknown to quite a few local secretaries. A steady stream of important communications pours out from Labour Party Headquarters all the year round, and one is amazed frequently to find that most important matters have never been placed before the Executives and Parties to whom they are addressed. We are not making this charge idly, for we know of instances where even intimations of important Conferences have not been brought to the notice of Local Parties, and there are endless cases of circulars having never been presented, leave alone read. We have discovered Divisional Parties which still remain in ignorance of the special procedure allowed by the Labour Party for the re-selection of candidates following the late General Election, and we instance this one matter as a type and not a solitary instance of the treatment accorded by some secretaries to valuable information or requests made by the Head Office. We should not like to number readers of the "Labour Organiser" among the offenders, but we hope that our readers will nevertheless appreciate that proper contact between Head Office and the constituencies can only be maintained when communications are properly and efficiently dealt with. Much misunderstanding results when circulars are not fully treated of and untold injury is sometimes done to the Party owing to misunderstandings and ignorance concerning Party activities. Head office communications ought to have a special place on every Local Party's agenda, and we trust that our own readers will see to this and so set an example to those who are delinquents.—*From the "L.O." for February, 1932.*

ADAM DELVES AGAIN

The season is approaching when Local Party activities begin to suffer from the competition of gardens and allotments. Old Adam's instincts

spring eternal in every man's breast, and one finds it hard to condemn the comrade who having once smelt the freshly turned spit is tempted to stay long after twilight and let the world go hang. But the digging and the seeding time do mean badly attended meetings, and often neglect both in the payment and collection of contributions. Some little prior thought might be given to this question, and some special arrangements made so that at any rate collection of members' contributions will not be neglected. On the other hand, perhaps we don't take the gardeners seriously enough, and there is a school which sneers at the allotment holder and tells us that under the capitalist system his work really tends to a lowering of the workers' standard of living or measure of ease. Be this as it may, the instinct is firmly implanted in most men's minds to sow and plant if it is at all possible. There was a time when several Labour Flower Shows were held in various parts of the country. Is not the idea worth revival, and can we not attract by this means a goodly proportion of amateur gardeners and allotment holders whose allegiance to Labour ought to be beyond doubt?—*From the "L.O." for February, 1932.*

Just as the gardener has his seasons to prepare, to dig, to sow, to hoe and to reap and prepare again, so in organisation we have our seasons. "Organisation to the season" would not be a bad slogan, and anyway, who does not practise it in part? The thing to avoid, in the garden, is doing things at the wrong season. New members entered at the commencement of the year give one the advantage of a full year's subscription, which membership campaigns in November don't do. Indoor meetings are for the dark nights, and canvasses and outdoor meetings for the summer nights and so on. A word on this season's work. Summer may come or summer may not, but the days will be long just the same, and regard for this factor and for people's summer habits will pay.—*From the "L.O." for June, 1932.*